

CONTACT FOR MEDIA: Roger Snell, (502) 564-6098

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Tuesday, March 6, 2001

Physicians Mutual becomes fifth choice for Kentucky's individual health insurance market

FRANKFORT, Ky. - More than 100,000 Kentuckians who buy their own health insurance have a fifth choice for coverage with Physicians Mutual Insurance Co. entering Kentucky's individual market, Insurance Commissioner Janie Miller announced today.

The Department of Insurance has approved rates and form filings that will give consumers a variety of benefit options and competitive rates. The company will begin taking applications by April 1 for coverage effective as early as April 15.

Physicians Mutual, based in Omaha, Neb., will use its statewide network of providers and career agents to serve Kentucky's individual market, which includes farm families, the self-employed and working Kentuckians who must buy their own health insurance. Anthem, Humana, Fortis, John Alden, and Physicians Mutual are the five companies offering individual health insurance in Kentucky.

Gov. Paul Patton and the General Assembly were instrumental in stabilizing the individual market and encouraging health insurance carriers to return, with passage last year of legislation creating Kentucky Access. Kentucky Access allows individuals with high-cost conditions to choose competitive rates for their needs while spurring insurance companies to offer more competitive rates for healthier individuals. The law has prompted three companies to return to Kentucky since the start of this year (Fortis, John Alden and Physicians Mutual).

Physicians Mutual plans to provide PPO standard and non-standard coverage. In addition to competitive rates, the company offers a wide variety of benefits, including prescription drug coverage, deductibles ranging from \$250 to \$5,000, and a number of other riders.

For more information, agents or consumers can call the Louisville sales office of Physicians Mutual at (502) 454-4883.